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RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 0388
RUEHKV/AMEMBASSY KYIV 0013
RUEHTI/AMEMBASSY TIRANA 0085
RUEHTL/AMEMBASSY TALLINN 0001
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 7001
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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: OCTOBER 20 MFA PRESS BRIEFING: PIRATES, CHINA-INDIA, NORTH KOREA

11. Key points at the October 20 MFA press briefing:

-- The Chinese Government attached great importance to the safety of the Chinese crew members taken hostage on their cargo ship, the Dexinhai.

-- China-India relations had enjoyed "good momentum" and Chinese efforts to obtain resources from India's neighbors were part of normal state-to-state relations.

-- The Kashmir Issue was "left over from history" and should be resolved peacefully.

-- China opposed the Dalai Lama visiting Arunachal Pradesh.

-- China was committed to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and would make constructive and consistent efforts for the peace and stability of the region.

-- China had made representations to Japan regarding a potential visit to that country by Uighur activist Rebiya Kadeer.

Pirates

12. The Chinese Government attached great importance to the safety of the Chinese crew members taken hostage on their cargo ship, the Dexinhai, said spokesperson Ma Zhaoxu at the October 20 regularly scheduled MFA press briefing. Immediately following the incident on October 19, the MFA and relevant agencies launched a contingency mechanism in which the MFA ordered its embassies to investigate and inform relevant governments. The Chinese Government was actively seeking to rescue the crew members and the MFA had issued a warning to Chinese merchant ships to avoid the area. Noting that "all-out rescue efforts" were ongoing, the spokesperson refused to provide further information on the incident.

China-India Relations

13. China-India relations had enjoyed "good momentum," in recent years as evidenced by frequent high-level contacts, business cooperation, youth exchanges and collaboration on regional and international issues. The two countries had agreed to push forward their bilateral strategic partnership and successfully celebrate next year's sixtieth anniversary of the establishment of bilateral relations. Regarding China's efforts to enter into agreements to purchase resources from India's neighbors, Ma said that the agreements amounted to mutually beneficial cooperation between friendly neighbors and normal state-to-state relations. China would continue to cooperate with relevant countries based on the five principles of peaceful coexistence. This cooperation was conducive

to peace and stability in the region, said Ma.

¶4. The Kashmir border dispute was an issue "left over from history" that should be properly handled by both sides. China hoped the issue would be resolved through peaceful dialogue in the interests of peace and stability in the region. Asked about the possibility of the Dalai Lama visiting Arunachal Pradesh, Ma said that China's position on the matter was clear and any visit by the Dalai Lama to the region would further expose his anti-China and separatist efforts. China was "greatly concerned" over Indian Government statements that the Dalai Lama was free to travel to the region and was "firmly opposed" to any visit. Indian media reports that China was building a dam on the Brahmaputra River were groundless, said Ma.

Visit to China of Ambassador Goldberg

¶5. Ambassador Philip Goldberg, U.S. Coordinator for Implementation of UNSC Resolution 1874, was visiting China from October 19-20 to exchange views on the implementation of UNSCR 1874, said the spokesperson. China was committed to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and would make constructive and consistent efforts for the peace and stability of the region. Asked if the resolution was still needed given North Korea's promise to return to multilateral talks, Ma only responded that China was committed to denuclearization of the Peninsula and the resumption of the Six-Party Talks. It was in the interest of all parties to work together toward that end, he added.

Japan: Kadeer Visit and Yasakuni Shrine

BEIJING 00002912 002 OF 002

¶6. China had made representations to Japan regarding a potential visit to that country by Uighur activist Rebiya Kadeer, said Ma. "Some forces in Japan" wanted to invite Kadeer to Japan despite China's grave concerns. China was firmly opposed to separatism, he added. Separately, when asked for China's response to reports that Japanese politicians might visit Tokyo's Yasakuni Shrine honoring war dead, Ma said that China's position on the matter was well known and Ma urged Japan to properly handle the issue.

Consumer Product Safety Commission Visit

¶7. Asked for China's response to statements by U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission Chairman Inez Tenenbaum regarding Chinese drywall sold in the United States, Ma said that he didn't want to comment on the issue but noted that business-to-business ties were in the interests of both countries.

British Citizen

¶8. The case of British citizen Akmal Shaikh, sentenced to death for smuggling four kilograms of heroin in the Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region in 2007 was a judicial issue and was being handled according to Chinese law, the spokesman maintained.

EU and ASEAN Summits

¶9. The MFA would release more information shortly on Premier Wen Jiabao's attendance at the upcoming ASEAN summit to be held in Thailand. China would work with relevant parties to make the meetings successful, said Ma. China and the European Union were also holding discussions on the next round of the China-EU summit.

Visits

¶10. Chinese Vice Premier Zhang Dejiang would visit the Ukraine, Albania and Estonia from October 26 to November 3. Wang Qishan

would host U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gary Locke and U.S. Trade Representative Ronald Kirk for the 20th U.S.-China Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade (JCCT) on the 29th of October in Hangzhou. Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi would travel to India on October 27 for trilateral meetings with Russia and India. During bilateral meetings with Indian counterparts, Yang would exchange views on issues of mutual interest including regional and international issues. Yang Jiechi would visit the Philippines from October 28-29.

HUNTSMAN